# 4. Collective Insecurity

It is inevitable that after a bloody and exhausting war the main preoccupation, at any rate of the victors, should be with peace. Like a sated debauchee creeping away from the scene of his excesses, they cry 'Never again!' and resolve that they will evermore be peaceable. Any of the Gadarene swine who escaped destruction, must have decided to remain henceforth at sea level, where the fury of the evil spirits which possessed them would have less dangerous consequences than at higher altitudes. War, like lust, is

> *Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,*
> *Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait,*
> *On purpose laid to make the taker mad.*

When it is over, it seems inconceivable that it should ever recur; but as time passes, and passion revives, the same fury resumes its old possession of once chastened hearts. 'Peace! peace!' when there is no peace yields pkce to 'War! war!* when there is no war, and then comes very war.

In the first decade after the War, no country in a position to wage a war, desired one; and French diplomacy was consistently exerted to secure a continuance of this fortunate state of affairs.

As the possibility of at any rate a major European war[1] was removed, peace seemed delightfully easy of attainment. All that was needed was that the League Covenant, guaranteeing the

status quo, should be observed. Geneva became, at once, the

[1]A major European war may be defined, from the English point of view, as one which involves England; perhaps, even, as one fought in. France.